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SUBJECT: CAMEROON: AMBASSADOR VISITS EIFORCES

¶1. (U) Summary: On May 7, the Ambassador and other Embassy personnel visited the planned future site of L'Ecole Internationale des Forces de Securite Interieure (EIFORCES) outside of Yaounde. EIFORCES is a Cameroon-led initiative with strong French support which is intended to build a robust, permanent, bilingual African peacekeeping training center for police and gendarmes - the only such facility on the continent. Cameroon is eager to play a larger regional leadership role and has demonstrated its commitment to the EIFORCES vision by offering land and funding to the development of the project, which will build on existing GRC-French cooperation in the training of Cameroonian gendarmes. Post was impressed with the concept, obvious planning that has begun and commitment on the ground and believes that this project, which will benefit all of Africa, merits USG support. End Summary.

Structure

¶2. (U) L'Ecole Internationale des Forces de Securite Interieure (EIFORCES) is envisioned as a joint venture between the GRC, the Government of France and the international community to create a bilingual training center for both Francophone and Anglophone African students. It expects to annually train about 1,000 international (mostly African) police and gendarmes for peacekeeping missions, mainly on the continent. EIFORCES' main missions are to prepare formed police and gendarmes units for UN peacekeeping missions, to create a "train the trainer" system for Africans, and to prepare trained units to pass the required UN tests before joining UN peacekeeping missions.

¶3. (U) The center will be located at the Centre de Perfectionnement aux Techniques de Maintien de l'Ordre (CPTMO), a gendarme instruction center which is already being used to train and prepare Cameroonian gendarmes for peacekeeping missions. EIFORCES plans to build more structures on the CPTMO compound and rehabilitate some buildings. Located 50 kilometers outside of Yaounde, the CPTMO is training center with a solid historical performance record.

¶4. (SBU) EIFORCES will be independently financed and will be under the authority of the Cameroonian Ministry of Defense. The Cameroonian Minister of Defense will be the President of EIFORCES and members of its oversight board will be from different countries and international organizations. EIFORCES is designed to be similar to other regional peacekeeping training centers in Mali and Ghana. However, unlike the other training centers it will focus on training formed police and gendarmes units instead of individuals or regular military forces.

Timeline

¶5. (U) French and Cameroonian officials said that the project should be complete by December 2010. The schedule is as follows:

- May 23, 2008, make a presentation to international donors in Paris.
- July 2008, select a technical office in Paris;
- December 2008, launch a call for international donations;
- February 2009, validate the donations;
- May 2009, begin building the compound;
- December 2010, completion of the construction.

¶6. (U) French and Cameroonian planners estimate that the building construction will cost 15.8 million USD and the equipment cost will be 2.1 million USD, with a total cost of about 11.7 million Euros (roughly 18 million USD). The annual operating budget for EIFORCES will be about 2 million USD. According to the French trainers, the GRC donated a significant amount of money to organize the November 2007 conference in New York to present the EIFORCES concept and has made other financial contributions to the project, as well as providing land for the 42-hectare campus.

A Concept Worth Supporting

¶7. (U) EIFORCES is looking for any form of international support. The existing CPTMO campus is small and the site for the future EIFORCES is largely overgrown grass and trees. However, the

YAOUNDE 00000458 002 OF 002

officials at the site are committed and the concept is compelling and well thought through. In our view, this is a project worth USG support, which could include: funding for the construction of the center (with input into the oversight of this construction); funding to sponsor a particular course of training; or providing a U.S. representative to be an integral part of the EIFORCES faculty and staff, where they can influence and shape the curriculum and development of this center. Supporting EIFORCES would fill an important Africa-wide need and reinforce strong existing mil-mil relations with Cameroon.

GARVEY